

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 081071

62

ORIGIN SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 R

DRAFTED BY EA/LC:AFANTIPPAS:AC

APPROVED BY EA:MSTEARNS

EA/LC/LMRIVES

S/S-O: P. P. SARROS

EUR/WE:EJBEIGEL

----- 003026

R 201727Z APR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

S E C R E T STATE 081071

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CB

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH BRIGADIER GENERAL LON NON,
APRIL 17, 1974.

REF: PHNOM PENH 5245 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. IN A GENERAL CONVERSATION WITH LONNON,
DEPT-OFF WAS TOLD THAT HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE INTERNAL

POLITICAL SITUATION. LON NON QUESTIONED THE DECISION TO
REASSIGN SENIOR FANK OFFICERS WITHOUT THOUGHT FOR
POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS. LON NON SAID THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT
WAS COURTEOUS IN ITS RECEPTION OF THE GKR FUNERAL
DELEGATION AND HAD REFUSED ENTRY OF THE KHMER COMMUNIST
DELEGATION. LON NON AGREED THAT THE GKR SHOULD DO ALL
POSSIBLE TO CONVINCE MOSLEM COUNTRIES THAT THE COMMUNISTS
WERE PERSECUTING THE MOSLEM COMMUNITY IN CAMBODIA. END
SUMMARY.

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 081071

2. DEPTOFF, AT INVITATION OF BRIGADIER GENERAL LON NON,
HAD GENERAL TOUR D'HORIZON AND HEARD REPORT OF LON NON'S
DISCUSSIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET AND FORMER
PRIME MINISTER HANG THUN HAK IN PARIS LAST WEEK. FOLLOWING

A BRIEF RUNDOWN OF THE CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION AROUND KAMPOT AND ALONG THE TONLE SAP FRONT, DEPTOFF AND LON NON HAD EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION OF THE CONSCRIPTION PROBLEM AS WELL

AS THE PROBLEMS POSED BY WHAT NON REGARDED PRECIPITATE REPLACEMENT OF DIVISIONAL COMMANDERS. NON, APPARENTLY UNAWARE OF THE MAGNITUDE OF THE REPLACEMENT PROBLEM, TOOK SURPRISED NOTE OF THE FACT THAT WITHOUT A MINIMUM OF SOME 180 RECRUITS A DAY, FANK EFFECTIVENESS FACED A DOWNHILL SPIRAL AS COMBAT UNITS WERE PROGRESSIVELY CHEWED UP. NON AGREED THAT THE BASIC PROBLEM RESTED ON LOCAL ADMINISTRATORS WHO WERE NOT PRODUCING THE CONSCRIPTS. ON THE SUBJECT OF THE REPLACEMENT OF SENIOR OFFICERS, NON SAID THAT HE WELL UNDERSTOOD THAT COMMANDERS SUCH AS UN KAUV WERE BURNED OUT AFTER 4 YEARS OF HARD FIGHTING AND SHOULD BE REPLACED. HOWEVER, IN THE CASE OF THE SEVENTH DIVISION, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER, HE SAID, FOR ANOTHER KHMER FR KROM (KK) TO HAVE ASSUMED COMMAND FROM UN KAUV, GIVEN THE ATTACHMENTS AND LOYALTIES OF THE KK. LON NON SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED BG DIEN DEL AS A MORE APPROPRIATE COMMANDER FOR THE SEVENTH SINCE HIS SECOND DIVISION IS NOT KK AND COULD MORE EASILY BE LED BY ANOTHER MAN. DEPTOFF SAID THAT THE USG WAS NOT ANXIOUS TO BECOME INVOLVED IN SUCH A DELICATE POLITICAL MATTER EVEN THOUGH WE AGREED THAT THE MOST CAPABLE AND MOTIVATED MEN SHOULD BE PUSHED FORWARD FOR SENIOR COMMAND. LON NON INDICATED THAT THOUGH HE BELIEVED THAT BG LITTAYE SUON AIMEE IS A COMPETENT CAREER OFFICER WHOSE RECENT WORK WITH THE ARTILLERY PROBABLY SAVED PHNOM PENH, HE HAD A DIFFICULT PERSON-ALITY AND WAS NOT THE RIGHT MAN TO BE SENT TO THE SEVENTH DIVISION. NON THEN LAUNCHED INTO PREDICTABLE VIEWS OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ, STATING THAT SOSTHENE WAS THE ROOT CAUSE OF THESE INEPT TRANSFERS. HE SAID THAT LITTAYE SUON, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS A FERNANDEZ FAVORITE (AND A FELLOW CATHOLIC WITH A FAIR TRACE OF VIETNAMESE ANCESTRY) THAT SOSTHENE HAD NO SENSITIVITY FOR THE FEELINGS OF THE KHMER KROM NOR OF THE MOSLEM CHAMS.

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 081071

3. DEPTOFF ASKED WHO, IN THE EVENT OF GENERAL FERNANDEZ'S DISABILITY, LON NON THOUGHT SHOULD REPLACE HIM. NON RESPONDED CAUTIOUSLY, SAYING THAT THE ONLY CAPABLE MAN WAS SAK SUTHSAKHAN. UPSHOT OF THIS EXCHANGE WAS THAT LON NON BELIEVES THAT WHILE NOTHING CAN BE DONE ABOUT THE CURRENT REASSIGNMENTS (HE HAD NO COMMENT ON UK SAUV AND HIS REPLACEMENT OF GENERAL ITH SUONG), HE SHOULD BE AT HOME TO ACT AS THE INTERMEDIARY FOR THE MARSHAL AND US MISSION IN SUCH MATTERS. NON'S ANTIPATHY FOR FERNANDEZ IS LONG-STANDING AND HE TOOK THE OCCASION TO SAY THAT LONG BORET HAD ALSO TOLD HIM IN PARIS LAST WEEK THAT HE TOO WAS CONCERNED ABOUT SOSTHENE'S POLITICAL INSENSITIVITY. IN ONE CASE, DESPITE BORET'S PLEADING WITH FERNANDEZ THAT HE

HAD CABINET RANK, SOSTHENE REFUSED A PRO FORMA REQUEST BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR A BRIEFING ON THE THEN

ONGOING SIEGE OF PHNOM PENH. FERNANDEZ'S RUDE REFUSAL INFURIATED THE ASSEMBLY AND MADE BORET'S POSITION THAT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT. SOSTHENE'S DISLIKE OF THE PARLIAMENT OF COURSE GOES BACK TO MARCH 1970 WHEN HE WAS CHASTISED AND FIRED AS CHIEF OF SECURITY BY THE THEN SITTING NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PRIOR TO THE OVERTHROW OF SIHANOUK.

4. TURNING TO THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION, NON ASKED

FOR A RUNDOWN OF US ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION. DEPTOFF INDICATED THAT RELATIVE CALM SEEMS TO HAVE SETTLED IN PHNOM PENH, THOUGH CONTINUING INFLATIONARY PRESSURES MADE ANY SOLUTION TO THE TEACHERS' PROBLEMS DIFFICULT TO COME BY. LON NON SAID THAT HE HAD MET WITH HANG THUN HAK IN PARIS AND HAD DISCUSSED SOCIO-REPUBLICAN PARTY AFFAIRS. HAK SAID THAT PARTY LEADER PAN SOTHI WAS NOT SUCCEEDING OVERLY WELL IN HIS EFFORTS TO BRING THE VARIOUS FACTIONS WITHIN THE PARTY TOGETHER. LON NON FELT THAT SINCE THIS HAD BEEN HIS ORIGINAL TASK, IN 1971, HE FELT

THAT THIS IS WHAT HE WOULD CONCENTRATE ON AFTER HIS RETURN HOME IN PREPARATION FOR PARTY ELECTIONS IN 1975. LON NON SAID THAT HANG THUN HAK WAS GOING TO TAIWAN AFTER PARIS FOR A LOW KEY VISIT TO THE GOC TO SEEK FURTHER POLITICAL WARFARE COUNSELORS TO HELP WITH THE PACIFICATION PROGRAM.

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 081071

5. ASKED FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS OF THE OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES, LON NON SAID HE WAS NOT WORRIED ABOUT THE REPUBLICANS SINCE THEY WERE SO FEW IN NUMBER. HOWEVER, THE DEMOCRATS WERE LABORING TO PUT TOGETHER A PRECINCT-LEVEL ORGANIZATION BOTH FROM AMONG THE OLD PRE-1955 DEMOCRATS AND FROM AMONG THE YOUNGER GENERATION. NON SAID HE BELIEVED NO ONE TOOK PARTY LEADER CHAU SAU VERY SERIOUSLY, BUT THAT HIS DEPUTY, MADAME TEP MAM, WAS DILIGENT AND PERSUASIVE AND COULD MAKE THE DEMOCRATS A SERIOUS NON-COMMUNIST CHALLENGE.

6. SPEAKING OF HIS TRIP TO FRANCE, NON SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED WITH FRENCH GOVERNMENT TREATMENT OF THE GKR DELEGATION TO THE PRESIDENTIAL FUNERAL. HE SAID THE FRENCH HAD REFUSED PERMISSION TO THE KHMER ROUGE TO ATTEND THE CEREMONIES AND THAT A REQUEST FROM KHIEU SAMPHAN TO VISIT HAD ALSO BEEN TURNED OFF. (ACTION REQUESTED OF PARIS: PLEASE TRY DISCREETLY TO ASCERTAIN THE VERACITY OF THIS CLAIM.)

7. DISCUSSING FUNK ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN PARIS, LON NON SAID THAT THE INSURGENTS WERE SPLIT BADLY OVER

SIHANOUK, BUT ADMITTEDLY WERE MORE ACTIVE AND WERE HAVING A FIELD DAY SUBORNING THE GROWING NUMBER OF STUDENTS FROM CAMBODIA IN FINANCIAL STRAITS. NON DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THERE WERE ANY CAMBODIAN COMMUNIST PERSONALITIES IN PARIS OF ANY REAL STATURE IN THE FUNK EXCEPT FUNK REPRESENTATIVE IN SOKHAN WHO, HE SAID, RANKED WITH IENG SARY. ON THE GKR SIDE, LON NON SAID THAT THE REPUBLIC WAS POORLY SERVED BY CHARGE HONG HOEUNG DOEUNG, WHO WAS UNABLE TO CONTROL THE VARIOUS PERSONALITIES OF THE MISSION AND THE STUDENTS. THE CHARGE, HE SAID, NEVER HAD ANY CONTACT WITH THE QUAI. NON SAID THAT A MAN AS YOUNG AND DYNAMIC AS AMBASSADOR UM SIM SHOULD BE SENT TO TAKE OVER. LON NON WRYLY OBSERVED THAT LACK OF FUNDS WAS A CONTINUING PROBLEM IN PARIS, AS HE HIMSELF KNEW SO WELL, SINCE HE HAS YET TO BE PAID HIS SALARY OR TO RECEIVE HIS AMBASSADORIAL COMMISSION. (COMMENT: UM SIM INFORMS HE HAS RECEIVED COPY OF KRET BUT FACT THAT IT IS DATED IN APRIL WILL CAUSE TROUBLE WITH LON NON WHO WILL THUS RECEIVE NO BACK PAY.)

8. DEPTOFF TOLD LON NON THAT WE HAD LEARNED THAT BG LES
SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 081071

KOSSEM WAS PIQUED AT DEPARTMENT OFFICERS IN THE LAOS-CAMBODIA COUNTRY DIRECTORATE FOR ALLEGED COMMENTS CONCERNING KOSSEM'S PERSONAL INTEGRITY. DEPTOFF STRESSED TO LON NON THAT HE SHOULD TELL LES KOSSEM THAT WHAT HAD BEEN INDICATED WAS THAT, WHILE KOSSEM WOULD BE INVALUABLE IN SELECTING A CIVILIAN CHAM DELEGATION, WE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT HE HIMSELF SHOULD LEAD SUCH A GROUP TO VARIOUS MOSLEM COUNTRIES IN SEARCH OF GA SUPPORT BECAUSE OF HIS MILITARY POSITION AND HIS WELL-KNOWN ROLE IN THE OVERTHROW OF SIHANOUK. LON NON, WHO IS PROBABLY THE SOURCE OF THE ERRONEOUS STORIES TO KOSSEM IN THE FIRST PLACE, SAID THAT KOSSEM DID IN FACT FEEL LEFT OUT OF THINGS AT HOME, BUT HE WOULD PASS THE MESSAGE AND THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE OVERLY CONCERNED ABOUT KOSSEM'S IRRITATION.

9. DEPTOFF INDICATED THAT OUR EMBASSY IN PHNOM PENH UNDERSTOOD THAT KOSSEM WAS PLANNING A TRIP TO KUALA LUMPUR THE WEEKEND OF APRIL 20 IN ADVANCE OF THE MOSELEM CHAM DELEGATION. DEPTOFF INDICATED THAT THIS WAS A GOOD IDEA AND THAT THE GKR SHOULD, IN ADDITION TO FIELDING A CHAM GOODWILL DELEGATION, ATTEMPT, THROUGH INDONESIAN AND MALAYSIAN AUSPICES, TO HAVE AN OBSERVER AT THE FORTHCOMING CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR KUALA LUMPUR IN MID-JUNE. LON NON TOOK COPIOUS NOTES AND SAID HE WOULD ARGUE IN FAVOR OF GETTING A DELEGATION INTO THE FIELD TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK BEFORE THE CONFERENCE IN JUNE.

10. FONMIN KEUKY LIM, NOW IN NEW YORK, HAS INFORMED AMBASSADOR UM SIM THAT KHMER EMBASSY PRESS ATTACHE PEANG METH GAFFAR IS TO BE PREPARED ON SHORT ORDER TO ACCOMPANY

A CHAM RELIGIOUS DELEGATION. WE ARE NOW BRIEFING GAFFAR

IN EXTENSO ON THE REPORTS AVAILABLE TO US ON COMMUNIST
EXACTIONS UPON THE CHAM AND THE MOSLEM RELIGION. FOLLOWING
A MEETING WITH KEUKY LIM THIS WEEKEND, WE SHOULD HAVE A
BETTER IDEA OF WHO IS TO DO WHAT AND WHEN. RUSH

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 27 JUL 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, FOOD SHORTAGE, REFUGEES, MILITARY PERSONNEL, MOSLEMS, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, SOCIAL PROBLEMS, MILITARY PLANS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, COMMUNISTS, POLITICAL SITUATION, PERSONNEL MOVEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE081071
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EA/LC:AFANTIPPAS:AC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D740093-0326
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740483/abbrzcry.tel
Line Count: 225
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: PHNOM PENH 5245 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONVERSATION WITH BRIGADIER GENERAL LON NON, APRIL 17, 1974.
TAGS: PFOR, CB, FR, (LONG BORET), (LON NON)
To: PHNOM PENH INFO JAKARTA
KUALA LUMPUR
PARIS
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005